

CLAIMS

1. A communication apparatus for receiving related information about contents, comprising:

transmission means for transmitting user personal information to an external device that provides related information about contents included in broadcast information being received, in order to request user registration;

storing means for storing said user personal information in a storage medium;

detection means, when in making an access request to said external device, for detecting whether or not said user personal information has been stored in said storage medium;

transmission means for transmitting related information request information that requests said related information about contents, in accordance with the detection result by said detection means; and

notification means for notifying information concerning a service providing said related information about contents being offered by said external device, in accordance with the detection result by said detection means.

2. The communication apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein:

said transmission means transmits available/unavailable request information that requests information showing whether or

not said external device offers a service providing said related information about contents, in accordance with said detection result by the detection means; and

 said notification means receives information showing whether or not said external device offers said service that was replied to said available/unavailable request information, and notifies whether or not said external device offers the service providing said related information about contents, based on the above information.

3. The communication apparatus according to Claim 2, characterized by;

 including display means for displaying advertisement information to promote said user registration in accordance with a reply to said transmitted available/unavailable request information.

4. The communication apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein;

 a URL showing said advertisement information to promote user registration is included in a reply to said transmitted available/unavailable request information.

5. The communication apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein;

 said user personal information includes at least name information corresponding to the name of said communication

apparatus.

6. A communication apparatus for providing related information about contents, comprising:

receiving means for receiving user personal information entered in user registration from a user communication apparatus being used by the user;

registration means for registering said user personal information received by the receiving means as customer information;

authentication means, if said receiving means receives the request information that requests a network address used to that said user communication apparatus obtains related information about contents included in broadcast information being received, together with said user personal information, for performing user authentication by comparing said user personal information with the user personal information in said customer information; and

transmission means for replying said network address, in accordance with the authentication result by said authentication means.

7. The communication apparatus according to Claim 6, wherein;

said transmission means, if the user is authenticated by said authentication means and a server corresponding to said broadcasting offers a related information provision service,

replies said network address, and if the user is not authenticated by said authentication means, said transmission means replies the information showing whether or not the server corresponding to said broadcasting offers a related information provision service.

8. The communication apparatus according to Claim 6, wherein:
unit name information showing the name of a terminal unit is included in said user personal information; and
said authentication means performs authentication processing according to whether or not said unit name information has been registered in association with user identification information in said user personal information.

9. A communication method in a communication apparatus for receiving related information about contents, comprising the steps of:

transmitting user personal information to an external device that provides related information about contents included in the broadcast information being received, in order to request user registration;

storing said user personal information in a storage medium;
detecting whether or not said user personal information has been stored in said storage medium, when in making an access request to said external device; and

transmitting related information request information that requests said related information about contents, in accordance with said detection result, and notifying information concerning a service providing said related information about contents being offered by said external device, in accordance with said detection result.

10. A communication method in a communication apparatus for providing related information about contents, comprising the steps of:

receiving user personal information entered in user registration from a user communication apparatus being used by the user;

registering said received user personal information as customer information;

performing, if receiving request information that requests a network address used for that said user communication apparatus obtains related information about contents included in the broadcast information being received together with said user personal information, authentication by comparing said user personal information with the personal information in said customer information; and

replying said network address, in accordance with said authentication result.

11. The communication method according to Claim 10, wherein:

 said server receives request information that requests said related information and a service session ID being a session ID with the above server that were transmitted from said user communication apparatus based on said network address;

 said server performs authentication processing by said service session ID, and if the result is an authentication error, said server transmits information showing the authentication error and identification information to identify the above server to said user communication apparatus;

 an authentication server receives authentication ticket issuance request information that requests to issue an authentication ticket for accessing said server, together with an authentication session ID being a session ID with the above authentication server, from said user communication apparatus;

 said authentication server performs authentication processing on said authentication session ID, and if authentication is permitted, said authentication server issues an authentication ticket and transmits the above issued authentication ticket to said user communication apparatus;

 said server receives the authentication ticket transmitted from said user communication apparatus, and also transmits the above received authentication ticket to said authentication server;

 if said authentication server authenticates said received

authentication ticket as legal, said authentication server transmits information showing the permission by authentication to said server;

if said server receives said information showing the permission by authentication, said server issues a service session ID being a session ID with said user communication apparatus, and also transmits the above issued service session ID to said user communication apparatus;

said server receives said request information that requests related information from said user communication apparatus, together with said service session ID; and

said server performs authentication processing by said service session ID, and if the authentication is permitted, said server transmits related information according to said request information to said user communication apparatus.

12. A communication program in a communication apparatus for receiving related information about contents, for making a computer perform the processing for:

transmitting user personal information to an external device that provides related information about contents included in the broadcast information being received, in order to request user registration;

storing said user personal information in a storage medium; detecting whether or not said user personal information has

been stored in said storage medium, when in making an access request to said external device; and

transmitting related information request information that requests said related information about contents in accordance with said detection result, or notifying information concerning a service providing said related information about contents to said external device in accordance with said detection result.

13. A communication program in a communication apparatus for providing related information about contents, for making a computer perform the processing for:

receiving user personal information entered in user registration from the user communication apparatus being used by the user; and

receiving related information request information that requests related information about contents that was transmitted in accordance with the detection result by that said user communication apparatus detected whether or not said user personal information has been stored.